

**REPORT OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE  
ON THE REQUEST FROM  
LESLEY UNIVERSITY  
TO CONTINUE TO OFFER  
ACADEMIC CREDIT COURSES/PROGRAMS IN MAINE**

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University of Southern Maine**

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**Date**

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**Dr. Jeannie Hamrin  
Associate Professor  
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Husson College**

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**Date**

**REPORT OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE**  
**FOR THE REQUEST FROM**  
**LESLEY UNIVERSITY**  
**(CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS)**  
**TO CONTINUE TO OFFER**  
**ACADEMIC GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN MAINE**

**Introduction**

This document constitutes the report of the Review Team appointed by the Maine State Board of Education to review the application from Lesley University to continue to offer, in Maine, instruction leading to completion of degree requirements in seven graduate level academic programs, from summer 2008 through summer 2011. Note: Five of the seven degree programs are currently offered in Maine.

The review was conducted in accordance with State of Maine Education Statute Title 20-A, and state policies 05-071-149 and 05-071-170 which set forth procedures and standards governing consideration of such an application as it applies to offerings in Maine by out-of-state institutions.

The team was comprised of Dr. Michael Beaudoin, Chair, Professor of Education, University of New England; Dr. Walter Kimball, Professor of Education, University of Southern Maine; and Dr. Jeannie Hamrin, Associate Professor of Education, Husson College. The team reviewed materials submitted by Lesley University and met with representatives of the applicant on 9 June, 2008 on the Westbrook College Campus of the University of New England in Portland, Maine. The team was supported by Harry Osgood, Higher Education Specialist for the Maine Department of Education.

**A. Operating Authorization and Accreditation**

The institution was founded in 1909, and was formally incorporated in Massachusetts as The Lesley School in 1941; subsequently, it became Lesley College, and its name was changed to Lesley University in 2000. It is based in Cambridge, MA, and has off-campus sites in 21 states.

The institution has been continuously accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. since 1952. It received ten-year accredited status at its latest review, conducted in the spring of 2005.

**This Standard is Met**

**B. Organization and Governance**

Lesley University is governed by a Board of trustees that delegates its responsibility and authority for the University to the President, and is in compliance with standards established by the State of Maine. Lesley University has by-laws outlining regulations and personnel responsibilities. The organizational chart shows the overall administration of the university in general and the location of the operation of regional programs, including Maine, specifically. The Lesley University team provided details of how the operations in Maine are overseen and integrated into the overall University structure. .

**This Standard is Met.**

**C. Institutional Objectives**

The mission statement of Lesley University is prominently displayed on the inside cover of the Academic Catalog. Their mission is “to provide preparation for professional careers in education, human services, management, and the arts through a conviction that people matter, and that the professionals who respond to their needs provide a unique service to society”. The mission is carried out through the University’s undergraduate and graduate programs on both the Cambridge campus and in regional, national, and international locations. In addition, the mission statement is accompanied by a Diversity Council Mission Statement, which specifically alludes to its commitment to providing a supportive learning environment to all students, including those studying at off-campus locations. .

**This Standard is Met.**

**D. Financial Resources**

The University has the financial resources necessary to continue to support and maintain academic offerings at its Maine-based sites. In addenda provided by the University at the request of the Review Team, an exhibit of Maine Revenues and

Expenses (FY 06-08) indicates that during this three-year period, annual income generated by tuition ranged from \$175,470 (06) to \$587,730 (08), which was a 3.3% increase. Expenses rose from \$125,811 (06) to \$464,189 (08), which was a 3.6% increase. Thus, net revenues generated were approximately \$280,000 in 2007 to \$133,000 in 2008.

Since 2006, Lesley has offered five master's level education degree programs in Poland, Westbrook, Cape Elizabeth, Hinckley, and York with cohort sizes ranging from a low of 11 to a high 22. Three recruiters are currently working the Portland area for the coming academic year. One of these is a new person hired for the potential new Buxton site.

Each year, projections are made regarding anticipated enrollments for the ensuing year to determine if a sustainable cohort can be launched at the designated sites. Attrition rates are negligible, thus program planners can confidently initiate course offerings knowing that adequate numbers will likely support completion of the program.

In the unlikely event that numbers should diminish, Lesley University has explicitly stated that it has an obligation to provide Maine students who are enrolled in a degree program with all the necessary program, academic and student services needed to complete their degree, regardless of the long-term fiscal viability of the program. The option of delivering courses online makes a phase-out situation viable even if relatively small numbers were to remain in a cohort.

### **This Standard is Met.**

#### **E. Admission Requirements**

Program admission requirements for the off-campus Master of Education (M.Ed.) programs offered in Maine are clearly defined and published in the Lesley University Student Handbook. Master's degree applicants must hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university and have a satisfactory grade point average.

All applicants must submit the application form, official transcripts from the institution granting their Bachelor's degree, any applicable graduate coursework, a Written Personal Statement and recommendations from three individuals with whom they have worked closely in an academic and/or professional capacity. Applicants for the Ecological Teaching & Learning program must arrange to have an individual or small group interview.

Lesley representatives informed the review team that applicants may not submit professional experience for academic credit. Students enrolling in a Lesley University Master's Program in Maine may request to transfer no more than 6 credits of appropriate graduate coursework from a regionally accredited institution. The policy for refund of tuition and fees is clearly stated in the Student Handbook.

Program coordinators initiate informational meetings covering program guidelines, and how to apply to Lesley. Their role is to facilitate the process locally; admissions decisions are made by appropriate personnel at the main campus.

All program materials provided to the review team are clear and the catalog is available online. There is a 74-page Lesley University Handbook for the Graduate and Adult Bachelor's Programs for the 2007-2008 academic years.

**This Standard is Met.**

**F. Academic Programs**

The mission statement of Lesley University is to prepare women and men for lives and careers that make a difference. This mission is reflected in the outreach program in Maine bringing graduate study in education to Maine's teachers. The schedule of weekend meetings is compatible with a teacher's schedule. The courses of study focusing on technology, special education, literacy, and other areas provide timely and current professional development. The cohort model encourages collegial and cooperative learning.

Academic policies are well articulated. The policies of the outreach programs in Maine are consistent with the policies of the home campus. There are procedures and multiple sources of data for evaluating courses and programs, including instructor evaluations and exit surveys. The data are reviewed by Lesley University Division Directors and incorporated into program improvement efforts.

The course of study for each program is clearly articulated in documents readily available to students and faculty. Each graduate program has a capstone experience, e.g., research project or seminar, through which students synthesize their learning during the program. Program materials are available at the site and to students primarily through online venues. When needed, as in the case of the tests for special education assessment, materials are shipped to the site for the program weekends. Program advisors review each student's transcript several months prior to graduation to assure that the degree requirements have been completed.

The programs submitted for approval are the degree of Master of Education in the areas of: Creative Arts in Learning; Technology in Education; Literacy; Language, Reading and Writing; Special Education, Pre-K-9; and Teaching, Learning and Assessment. The Lesley University team was also presented with information concerning two new and fully online programs which will not use Maine sites but will be available to Maine teachers. They are a Master's of Science in Education in Mathematics Education and a Master's of Science in Education in Science Education Online.

**This Standard is Met.**

## **G. Library and Learning Programs**

All departments of Ludcke Library, on the Lesley University campus, provide direct services to off-campus students. Students in outreach programs have full access to the electronic and print resources through the MyLesley online system. Electronic materials and reference databases online and the print resources through a national inter-library loan service are available to Maine students. There is telephone and email reference consultation for students and faculty. Instruction and tutorials on using library resources are provided to students and faculty through self-paced online modules, instructional materials, and the Ask-A-Librarian services.

The online Off-Campus Library Handbook provides information for finding and citing resources, research in databases, using library services, and accessing libraries world wide. Off campus library services are coordinated by an Assistant Library Director.

**This Standard is Met.**

## **H. Degree Requirements**

Academic program requirements are the same that were reported during the last program review. The requirements are published in the Academic Catalog for Graduate and Adult Baccalaureate Programs. The course of study for each program is clearly articulated. Academic advisement and graduation requirements are published in the Student Handbook for Graduate and Adult Baccalaureate Programs (2007-2008). The visit by the Lesley University representatives provided further details as to how degree requirements are completed by students at the regional sites. Each graduate program has a capstone experience, e.g., a cooperative research project or other project in which students synthesize and present their learning from the program. All capstone seminars have a checklist, rubric or outline of assignments that must be followed. Program advisors review each student's transcript several months prior to graduation to assure that the degree requirements have been completed. The registrar performs the final program audit to assure the degree requirements have been met.

**This Standard is Met.**

## **I. Faculty**

The University makes effective use of a cadre of both full-time (core) and part-time (adjunct) faculty employed by Lesley University to provide instruction for its Maine-based courses. Based on a review of credentials of the approximately 70 faculty who are or who have provided instruction in Maine, it appears that all are sufficiently qualified and credentialed to teach at the graduate level. An exhibit within the Renewal Application materials lists faculty who have taught or who will teach one or more courses at Maine sites. The majority hold Ph.D. or Ed.D. degrees, while others have a Master's degree appropriate to their respective teaching areas. About 40% are identified as core

faculty, the rest are adjuncts. All or most core faculty also have parallel teaching duties in the same programs on the Lesley campus.

Procedures exist to evaluate and monitor teaching effectiveness of these instructional personnel, through institutionalized evaluation instruments and review of same by academic administrators. University representatives also reported that a comprehensive system for mentoring new adjunct has been successfully instituted. All faculty, including adjuncts, have the opportunity for input into the program(s) for which they provide instruction, and there are now two scheduled faculty meetings per year for all off-campus instructors to meet. This helps ensure proper sequencing of courses, avoids duplication of content provided by various faculty members, and encourages consistency in criteria by which faculty assess students' academic performance. The Lesley representatives assured the review team that all faculty, including adjunct practitioners, are well versed in current research and literature, and are well aware of recent developments in their respective areas of instruction.

The University publishes a detailed Adjunct Faculty Handbook which is made available in an online format to all off-campus instructors

**This Standard is Met.**

**J. Physical Facilities**

Lesley University has operated academic programs in seven Maine locations in the four years since the previous approval, ranging from York in the south of the state, to Poland in the west, and Hinckley in the north.

Contractual agreements are in place for active sites. These venues appear to be suitable as supportive learning environments for adult students. The site guidelines and agreement contract stipulate requirements such as telephone service, classroom space, heating and air conditioning, and compliance with disability access. All site locations currently are public school buildings thus meeting fire and safety codes. The site guidelines and agreement, however, do not stipulate that facilities must comply with fire and safety codes. The University intends to add fire and safety code compliance to the site agreement in the event that a private facility is proposed for instructional use.

All active sites have a site coordinator who regularly interacts with students and faculty as needed to support the program and its participants.

**This Standard is Met**

## **K. Student Services**

In acceptance letters to Maine-based graduate students, a faculty or academic advisor is named. A complete orientation packet is sent to each Maine student prior to the first class meeting. There is a system of “automatic registration” once off-campus students are in a cohort

The 2007-2008 Student Handbook clearly lists all student services that are available to on-campus Lesley students. Many of these services are also available to Maine students online through mylesley.edu or LOIS (Lesley’s Online Information Service, www.lesley.edu/lois). These are the satellite campus students’ window to Lesley University and the information, services and news most important to him/her.

Additional student services are clearly cited on the Lesley University web page and in the Student Handbook. Job placement information is available on the LOIS website to off-campus students.

The Lesley representatives reported that there has not been any serious dissatisfaction with the services Lesley provides to Maine students. The vast majority of students seem very positive regarding their experience with Lesley. Maine Site Coordinators are helpful in quickly resolving any complaints.

The Adjunct Faculty Handbook lists various services and websites for faculty and students. These include the Division of Student Life and Academic Development, Career Resource Center, Counseling Center, International Student Services, Center for Academic Achievement, and the Office of Community Service.

### **This Standard is Met.**

## **L. Telecommunication Instruction**

Presently, Lesley does not offer any courses in Maine via distance learning formats, such as online delivery. It is considering the development and implementation of both hybrid (combination of face-to-face and online), and/or fully online courses in selected off-campus programs, likely in the near future. Some faculty currently utilize web-based resources in their classroom-based courses, and the Lesley representatives recognized the need to adequately train its faculty to effectively teach in the online environment. It appears that the plan is to introduce the online delivery mode as new programs are initiated in a given region, rather than convert to online delivery with existing programs offered face-to-face.

The Review Team sees this as a positive program modification that is well suited to course delivery in Maine, with busy working adult learners, many having long distances to travel, often in winter weather.



**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the request from Lesley University to renew its current authorization to offer, in Maine, the degree of Master of Education in the areas of: Creative Arts in Learning; Technology in Education; Literacy; Language, Reading and Writing; Special Education, Pre-K-9; and Teaching, Learning and Assessment. The period for approval would be from summer 2008 through summer 2011.